

Message Text

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11

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

SAJ-01 IO-11 ACDA-05 SCCT-01 CU-02 /080 W

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R 121448Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2787

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

/AMCONSUL STANBUL 1411

AMCONSUL IZMIR

USMISSION USNATO

EUCOM

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 1979

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: POLITICAL VIOLENCE

1. DURING THE PAST WEEK AT LEAST THREE PERSONS HAVE DIED IN TURKEY AS A RESULT OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS ASSOCIATED WITH POLITICAL CONFLICT AMONG STUDENTS. IN ADDITION SEVERAL STUDENTS HAVE BEEN INJURED AND HUNDREDS ARRESTED. SEVERAL FACULTIES WHICH HAD ONLY RESUMED CLASSES MARCH 1 HAVE EXPERIENCED INTERMITTENT BOYCOTTS WHILE OTHERS HAVE BEEN CLOSED FOR PERIODS TO AVOID FURTHER VIOLENCE.

2. WHILE CLASHES BETWEEN STUDENTS HAVE ACCOUNTED FOR MOST OF THE VIOLENCE, SOME INCIDENTS OF TERRORISM HAVE OCCURRED. IN ANKARA MARCH 11, A BUILDING ON THE CAMPUS OF THE STATE ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING ACADEMY, WHICH WAS USED BY POLICE AS A REST AREA, WAS DESTROYED BY DYNAMITE. THE NIGHT BEFORE ON THE SAME CAMPUS A STUDENT HAD BEEN BEATEN WITH CHAINS AND WAS ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL WITH A BRAIN HEMORRHAGE. SINCE
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MARCH 12 IS THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE "COUP BY MEMORANDUM"

WHICH FORCED DEMIREL OUT OF POWER IN 1971, ANTI-DEMIREL GROUPS, EXTREMISTS AND OTHERS, ARE CELEBRATING THE OCCASION. ALL FACULTIES OF AEGEAN UNIVERSITY ARE CLOSED BY A ONE DAY BOYCOTT. MORE EXTRME ELEMENTS MAY WISH TO MARK THE EVENT WITH VIOLENT INCIDENTS.

3. MARCH 13, SEVERAL REFORMIST ORGANIZATIONS LED BY THE LEFTIST TOB-DER (TURKISH TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION) ARE HOLDING A WIDELY PUBLICIZED RALLY IN ANKARA IN PROTEST OF "FASCISM" AND ALLEGED POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED TRASFERS OF TEACHERS. WHILE THE RALLY ITSELF WILL PROBABLY NOT BE VIOLENT, AN ATTEMPT BY DEMONSTRATORS TO MARCH INTO THE CENTER OF THE CITY MIGHT WELL RESULT IN VIOLENCE, ESPCIALY IF POLICE ATTEMPT TO STOP THEM.

4. COMMENT: COMBINATION OF EXTREMELY COLD WEATHER AND CLOSED SCHOOLS REDUCED THE LEVEL OF STUDENT VIOLENCE IN ANKARA AND MOST OTHER CITIES OF TURKEY DURING THE FIRST TWO MONTHS OF 1976. THE RECENT RESURGENCE IS UNDOUBTEDLY A PRECURSOR OF SPRING. NEVERTHELESS,ALTHOUGH BY ABSOLUTE STANDARDS THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE IS HIGH AND WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO BE SO, ITS POLITICAL EFFECT IS IN LARGE PART MITIGATED BY A COMBINATION OF FACTORS:

A. THE LEVEL OF TOLERANCE OF VIOLENCE BY THE TURKISH PEOPLE HAS RISEN SIGNIFICANTLY DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

B. FINANCIAL SCANDALS INVOLVING PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL'S NEPHEW AND SENIOR OFFICERS IN THE AIR FORCE CURRENTLY DOMINATE DOMESTIC POLITICS.

C. RECENT INTERNAL CRISIS IN THE MAJOR OPPOSITION PARTY, THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP), HAS REDUCED THAT PARTY'S ABILITY TO CAPITALIZE ON THIS ISSUE.

5. THEREFORE,ALTHOUGH IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE THAT AN INCREASING LEVEL OF VIOLENCE WILL EVENTUALLY SO TIP THE SCALES OF PUBLIC OPINION AGAINST THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT THAT THE MILITARY OR OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES WILL DECIDE TO TAKE SOME EFFECTIVE ACTION, THERE IS NO PRESENT INDICATION THAT THEY ARE ABOUT TO DO SO.

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